Minóy
Punctum Books
Dead Letter Office
Edited by Joseph Nechvatal
Contributors Maya Eidolon, Joseph Nechvatal, Amber Sabri
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Book Review by Diane Klutz

What immediately stood out to me about *Minóy* is that it does not simply recover an artist, it stages a kind of rescue from disappearance itself. The project doesn't treat archival recovery as a neutral act of preservation, but as something closer to an aesthetic intervention: a way of reintroducing obscured sound back into circulation without flattening its opacity.

That distinction matters.

Noise music histories are often written through scenes of visibility labels, venues, movements, or easily categorized stylistic shifts. But *Minóy* seems to resist that kind of legibility entirely. What emerges instead is a practice defined by drift, obscurity, and sonic density works that refuse to resolve into stable interpretive form. The result is not just "noise" as genre, but noise as condition: something that unsettles the boundary between signal and absence.

And in that sense, the archival dimension of this project becomes central.

The rediscovered recordings, the re-mastering process, and the collaborative reconstruction of Minóy's catalog all seem to operate in a delicate tension: making the work audible again while preserving its resistance to full perceptibility. That balance between exposure and concealment feels like one of the most important aesthetic problems the book is engaging.

What is especially compelling is the way the essays frame obscurity not as a lack, but as a method.

Minóy is positioned not as an artist who "needs explaining," but as someone whose work actively theorizes its own conditions of reception. The notion of "hyper-noise aesthetics," along with the idea of flipping figure and ground, suggests a practice that destabilizes listening itself, forcing the listener to confront the limits of attention, memory, and interpretive control.

And the inclusion of visual material from Maya Eidolon (Amber Sabri) extends that logic further. The Minóy as Haint as King Lear portrait series introduces another layer of instability where identity, authorship, and performance blur into one another.

Sound, image, and archive begin to circulate as interconnected forms of residue rather than discrete media objects. What remains is not a coherent portrait of an artist, but a field of traces that refuse to settle.

Noise Art/Cultural Studies

Minóy (the book-companion to the CD and cassette) provides an introduction and overview to the important noise music artist Minóy, the pseudonym of American electronic art musician and sound artist Stanley Keith Bowsza (1951-2010). Minóy's audio compositions, that often conjure up an enignatic world of almost dreadful depth, earned him a key position in the homemade independent cassette culture scene of the 1980s.

The book contains two written monograms on Minóy, one by close friend Amber Sabri and one by artist and art theoretician Joseph Nechvatal. There are three additional essays by Nechvatal; the first of which recounts the history of the recovery of the audio material from obscurity. In subsequent essays, Nechvatal reflects on the artistic benefits of obscurity and situates Minóy's deep droning palimpsest soundscapes within an original aesthetic theoretical context of an obscure *monster sacré*, and he also examines Minóy's legacy in terms of current aesthetic responses to the surveillance state and couches Minóy's mysterious and excessive compositions in terms of a general art of noise. In total, Minóy's work undergoes a critical intricacy in terms of a contemporary art practice engaged in the fragile balance between production of, and resistance to, perceptibility. Nechvatal brings a subversive reading to Minóy's work by presenting it as a form of hyper-noise artistic gazing, based in the flipping of figure and ground. The book also contains sixty black-and-white portrait images from the *Minóy as Haint as King Lear* series that photographer Maya Eidolon (Amber Sabri) created before his death in collaboration with Minóy (then known as Haint) and Stuart Hass (Minóy's lifetime partner).

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Minóy

Joseph Nechvatal, ed.

MINÓY

(A) Corridors (1985)
Shame On Love (1986)
Mass (1986)
Distant Thoughts (1986)

(B) Reading the Last Fortune Cookie (1986)
Alarm (1990)
Relocation (1990)
Bread and Wine (1990)
Pawbone Kisser Daylights Sins I (1993)

Curated by:
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